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**Subject:** What is the human cost of the heart of the pipeline? Trump's new FERC commissioner Rob Powelson accepted gifts from energy industry as state regulator

What is the human cost of the heart of the pipeline?

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Trump's new FERC commissioner Rob Powelson accepted gifts from energy industry as state regulator



August 28, 2017

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## Campus & Community Action

## Study “Garbage Juice” Before Spraying It, Says Duke Undergraduate

Bryce Cracknell is a Duke University student who interned in Summer 2017 with the Southern Environmental Law Center, North Carolina Environmental Justice Network and at North Carolina Conservation Network as part of the Kenan Pathways of Change Program.

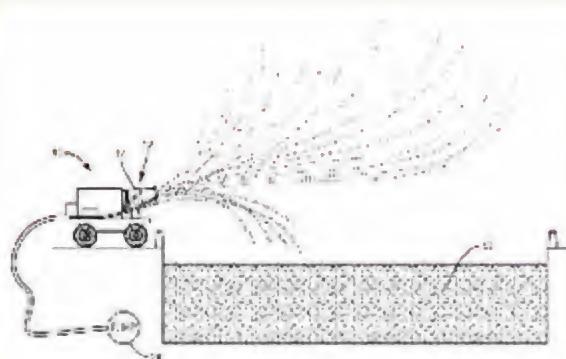


FIG. 3

[In early July], our lawmakers passed House Bill 576 that would allow municipal solid waste landfills to spray “garbage juice” or leachate over the landfill without a permit. This process is referred to as “aerosolization” and uses high pressured fans to blast leachate into the air as a way to “treat” the leachate.

There is no state or federal definition for aerosolization. In theory, the water in leachate will evaporate into the air while the harmful components will fall back into the landfill as a liquid. Like the pills in our game, this idea came from someone who is not a scientist, and this “technology” has not been studied.

Leachate is the liquid that seeps through the waste of landfills and is collected. It is currently treated as wastewater, either onsite or at a municipal wastewater treatment plant, as it is known to carry a wide range of toxic materials, bacteria

and viruses. Studies have shown that leachate may contain large amounts of volatile perfluoroalkyl sulfonic acids (PFAs), which are linked to cancer, and viruses such as avian influenza, which can survive for several months in landfill leachate. [Read more on Fayetteville Observer.](#)



North Carolina residents: [tell your legislators to oppose H576](#) which would allow for the spraying of contaminated landfill wastewater into the air to reduce its volume.

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## Environmental News

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### What is the human cost of the heart of a pipeline?



In Union Hill neighborhood of Buckingham county, a plot of land is proposed as the site of a compressor station for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. Compressor stations

are the heart of the pipeline, pressurizing gas to be pumped across hundreds of miles. A compressor station is the lynchpin of a pipeline, as well as the most

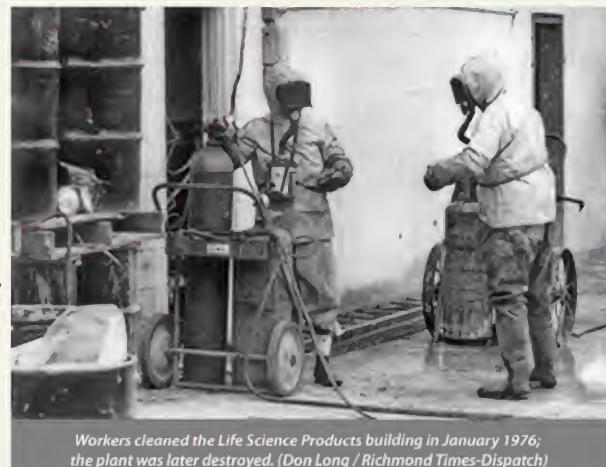
dangerous piece of infrastructure. Union Hill neighborhood, where the station is proposed to be built, is a predominantly African-American neighborhood founded by slaves freed after the Civil War. How does the history of this neighborhood coincide with the construction of a large, noisy, dirty and dangerous compressor station? How have the people most affected by its construction responded? Have elected officials or corporate decision makers heard their voices?

In the midst of turmoil surrounding historic erasure in the south, this episode tells the unique and troubling story of land, ownership and theft in the neighborhood of Union Hill, Buckingham County, Virginia. [Listen to the full podcast on End of the Line.](#)

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## Virginia town tries to move on 40 years after Kepone disaster

In the summer of 1975, the Vietnam War had just ended, the movie Jaws was hitting the big screen — and an environmental catastrophe was unfolding in Hopewell, VA, that would linger for decades in Chesapeake Bay waters. More than two dozen workers at a plant producing a powdery, white insecticide called Kepone were hospitalized for involuntary tremors, later known as “the Kepone shakes.” These



*Workers cleaned the Life Science Products building in January 1976; the plant was later destroyed. (Don Long / Richmond Times-Dispatch)*

were the first of many troubling symptoms linked to heavy exposure to the chemical, including at least temporary sterility. It has since been classified as a likely carcinogen. [Read more on Bay Journal.](#)

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## Climate change language deleted from NIH site



The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) made several changes to its website in the past few months, some of which altered mentions of "climate change" to read simply "climate," according to the

[Environmental Data & Governance Initiative Website Monitoring Report](#) released last week (August 20).

Politico first reported on EDGI's findings, in a story entitled "[NIH site drops mentions of 'climate change'.](#)" That story implies links between changes to the NIEHS site and President Trump's stance on global warming, as does a later story in [The Guardian](#) that also draws parallels to recent instances where other government websites, including that of the Environmental Protection Agency and the White House, removed mentions of climate change across the board. [Read more on The Scientist.](#)

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## Court rejects pipeline rubber-stamp, orders climate impact review

An appeals court rejected federal regulators' approval of a \$3.5 billion natural gas pipeline project on Tuesday over the issue of climate change. The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) failed to fully consider the impact of greenhouse gas emissions from burning the fuel that would flow through the Southeast Market Pipelines Project when the commission approved the project in 2016. [Read more on InsideClimate News](#).



## Researchers took on Exxon's dare to prove it misled the public about climate change



Two years ago, [Inside Climate News](#) and [L.A. Times](#) investigations found that while ExxonMobil internally acknowledged that climate change is human-made and serious, it publicly manufactured doubt about the science. Exxon has been trying unsuccessfully to smother this slow-burning PR crisis ever since, arguing the

findings were “deliberately cherry picked statements.” But the company’s problems have grown to include probes of its business practices by the New York and Massachusetts attorneys general and the Securities and Exchange Commission. [Read more on Grist.](#)

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## **Right of Way: Pennsylvania residents in path of Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline brace for fight over construction**

If you know where to look, you can spot them along the roadsides as you drive through the hilly farmland of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Short wooden stakes stand exactly 50 feet apart, topped with orange tap. The markers seem benign, but for many Lancaster residents, the threat they represent is anything but: These poles mark the proposed path of the Atlantic Sunrise natural gas pipeline.



The Atlantic Sunrise project is a \$3 billion expansion of natural gas giant’s Williams’s Transco pipeline network. Building it will require burying a 42-inch pipe under miles of Amish country, below farms and rivers, in the face of opposition from many Lancaster residents. [Read more on The Intercept.](#)

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## Fracking giant Cabot sues Pennsylvania water contamination victim for



### \$5 million

Cabot Oil and Gas Corporation has filed a [\\$5 million civil lawsuit](#) in county court against Dimock, Pennsylvania, resident Ray Kemble, who claims Cabot severely contaminated his water after drilling and [hydraulic fracturing \("fracking"\)](#) activity.

The company, scrutinized in the film *Gasland* and subject of an [ongoing federal class action lawsuit](#) since 2009, has also sued a handful of lawyers representing Kemble. Cabot's lawsuit claims that Kemble harmed the fracking giant by attempting to "attract media attention" over pollution to his water, which the company claims breached an earlier 2012 settlement agreement as part of the ongoing federal class action lawsuit. [Read more on DeSmogBlog.](#)

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## Trump's new FERC commissioner Rob Powelson accepted gifts from energy industry as state regulator

Robert Powelson, President [Donald Trump's newly appointed commissioner](#) to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), received both gifts and reimbursements for travel, lodging, and hospitality from the energy and utility sectors in his previous position as a state regulator. He will now regulate those sectors at the federal level.



Powelson, a Republican, began his tenure at FERC last week. [Documents and emails](#) recently uncovered by the Energy & Policy Institute, a watchdog monitoring attacks on renewable energy, indicate that he maintained a close relationship with industry groups as a member of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.

In addition, earlier this year, Powelson said pipeline opponents are engaged in "jihad," a statement which [drew criticism from activists](#) and further solidified his pro-industry image. [Read more on DeSmogBlog.](#)

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## Trump's Interior Department moves to stop mountaintop removal study



Trump administration officials have told the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine to halt a review of the increased public health risks faced by Appalachian residents who live near mountaintop removal coal-mining sites, the academies revealed in a statement issued Monday.

Word of the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement order was disclosed by the academies just hours before the scientific panel conducting the study was scheduled to hear from coalfield residents at a public meeting Monday evening in Hazard, Kentucky, and then hold two days of business meetings in Lexington. [Read more on West Virginia Gazette Mail.](#)

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**17 million in US live near active oil or gas wells**



More than 17 million people in the United States live within a mile of an active oil or natural gas well, according to a new study.

The study is the first peer-reviewed, nationwide estimate of how many Americans live close to active wells and raises health concerns, as such proximity has been linked to heart, lung and brain problems, some cancers, and certain birth defects such as lower birth weights, pre-term births and heart defects.

"The closer you are to a well, the more likely you are to have health impacts," said Eliza Czolowski, lead author of the new study and an associate in the energy and environment program at PSE Health Energy, a nonprofit research institute in Oakland, California.

Using state-level information on oil and gas drilling and the U.S. Census, Czolowski and colleagues had data for 30 states and estimated that 17.6 million Americans, or about 6 percent of the population of the contiguous 48 states, lives within a mile of an active oil or gas well.

Perhaps most concerning for public health, about 1.4 million children under the age of 5 live within a mile of active wells. [Read more on Daily Climate](#).

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The Rachel Carson Council, founded in 1965, is the national environmental organization envisioned by Rachel Carson to carry on her work after her death. We promote Carson's ecological ethic that combines scientific concern for the environment and human health with a sense of wonder and reverence for all forms of life in order to build a sustainable, just, and peaceful future.

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